

The Law School Years: Probing Questions, Actionable Data

Law School Survey of
Student Engagement
2005 Annual Survey Results

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University of California,
Los Angeles School of Law

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The Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) documents dimensions of quality in legal education and provides information about law student participation in effective educational activities that law schools and other organizations can use to improve student learning.




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Foreword



I am very pleased to introduce the second annual report of the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) and to applaud the work of George Kuh, Patrick O'Day, and their colleagues at the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research in developing this highly useful new tool for law school faculty and administrators. The survey data also provide an important resource for the increasing number of scholars doing serious empirical research on legal education. The aphorisms about the experiences of first-, second- and third-year law students used in this year's report reflect common perceptions of legal education. If one seeks to explore the reality behind the aphorisms, however, it is striking how little reliable quantitative evidence has been available until recently about what students actually do in law school and how they assess their education.

Happily, the times are changing, and there is an increased interest in serious empirical work about how and what law students learn. The American Bar Foundation has recently published the first installment of its planned longitudinal study of law graduates—*After the JD*—which collected information from a large sample of recent law graduates, not only about their early practice experience, but also about their retrospective assessment of their education. The recent *ABA Study on Law School Curriculum* provides useful information about current curricular developments in law schools. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, a cosponsor of LSSSE, has worked in recent years through its Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) to develop a cross-disciplinary scholarship about teaching and learning at the university and graduate level. The resulting scholarship documents effective pedagogy and illuminates student learning, bringing serious social science to bear on the day-to-day life of the classroom. The Association of American Law Schools, also a cosponsor of LSSSE, has recently divided

its standing committee on Curriculum and Research into separate standing committees, so that the Committee on Research may more aggressively support and promote empirical research on legal education. All these developments suggest that the LSSSE data will be used fruitfully, not only by the individual schools which participate in the annual surveys, but also by scholars interested in serious empirical research on legal education and by the ultimate consumers of that research—law school faculties and administrators.

In just two administrations of its survey, LSSSE has already collected information from 34,000 law students at 73 law schools representing the whole spectrum of legal education. We now have interesting and useful information about topics ranging from how often individual students speak in class and how often they do multiple drafts of papers to their debt loads, commuting time and planned areas of specialization in law practice. As this annual report suggests, some data are encouraging, since many students appear quite satisfied with their educations. Other survey responses suggest areas where we may be doing less than we would like.

For example, many law teachers believe that the interactive classroom common at least in the first year of law school provides the kind of “active learning experience” that modern learning theorists tell us is essential to true learning. Some of the LSSSE data suggest, however, that there is less interaction than we may believe. Only about one-half of all students report that they often ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions, and one in six students “never” gets prompt oral or written feedback from faculty. When asked what they learned in law school, about 40% of all students said they did not learn a lot about working effectively with others. Collaborative learning is well-established as an effective teaching tool, and lawyers, like other professionals, need to learn to work as

The survey data provide an important resource for the increasing number of scholars doing serious empirical research on legal education.

part of a team. The survey data suggest a need for more group or team projects as part of the standard curriculum, both to increase student engagement and to help students learn to work effectively with others.

There is longstanding concern about the effective use of the third year of legal education, and the LSSSE data shed light on some third-year issues. While it will come as no surprise to most faculty members that third-year students are less often fully prepared for class than first-year students, other data in the survey raise interesting questions about why that is so. In reporting on their educational gains from law school, third-year students look very much like first-year students. In a well-structured professional education, third-year students should feel they have learned more about solving complex real world problems, developing ethics, and developing clearer career goals than first-year students, and yet the responses across classes are virtually flat, with little increase from first year to third year. These responses tend to confirm the criticism that the third year is not used effectively to build on students' existing skills and provide a sophisticated transition to the practice of law.

The LSSSE project provides a wonderful opportunity for a reexamination of some chronic questions in legal education using reliable national data. Participating law schools can compare their own programs to the national average or to selected groups of peer law schools by using LSSSE data, as well as coordinate the survey data with studies of student performance at individual law schools. Whether addressing structural issues like student debt, service issues like career counseling, or core educational issues like the need for more imaginative curriculum and pedagogy in the third year, law schools will find the LSSSE survey a highly useful tool in identifying strengths and weaknesses in their own programs, and in learning about programs at other schools. Legal education as a whole will benefit from a database which can suggest new ways to think about and improve teaching and learning in law school.

Alison Grey Anderson
Professor of Law Emerita
University of California,
Los Angeles School of Law



The LSSSE project provides a wonderful opportunity for a reexamination of some chronic questions in legal education using reliable national data.

Director's Message

Suppose you had free rein to design an ideal learning environment for law school students. What conditions should be present? What teaching practices are more likely to challenge and support law school students to levels of performance beyond what they themselves imagined? How will they obtain the skills and competencies demanded by today's increasingly complicated legal environment? And how would you know whether you were accomplishing these and other desirable objectives?

Reasonable people may not agree on every detail of what constitutes an engaging law school experience. But there are some elements that most would say are important. Among them are opportunities to read, think and write clearly and persuasively, to practice oral arguments, and to get meaningful feedback on their performance. Certainly opportunities to apply what one is learning will be important. Because the practice of law is a social instrument of change, working effectively with people who are from different backgrounds surely must be a high priority for lawyers in an increasing diverse world.

If these activities and others are important to a high-quality law school student experience, how might we go about measuring the extent to which these conditions are present? The Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE, pronounced "lessie") was designed to help answer this question.

The Law School Survey of Student Engagement is an annual survey that collects information directly from law students about how they spend their time, what they experience during their legal training, and how they benefit from the law school experience. The idea for the project was suggested by Carl Monk, the Executive Director of the Association of American Law Schools. Inspired by the undergraduate National Survey of Student Engagement, LSSSE began in 2003 with a field test involving 11 law schools. Two national administrations followed, in spring 2004 and 2005. This report explores selected relationships between effective educational practice and aspects of the law student experience. For schools that participated in both 2004 and 2005, only data from the 2005 survey are included.

The findings are organized around the patterns of experiences that common lore suggests characterize the three traditional years of law school. The first year of law school will "scare you to death," or so the saying goes. The implication is that students will be intimidated by a demanding work load and a steady barrage of Socratic teaching by faculty members who personify the stern, detached Professor Kingsfield from "The Paper Chase." The second year is thought to be even more demanding, captured by the phrase "They will work you to death." But by the third year, students seem to have learned how to "do" law school, mastering routine academic challenges so well that the experience it is said will "bore you to death."

By definition, aphorisms have elements of truth to them. But as we shall see, there is much more depth and complexity to the student experience than these adages suggest. Among the more obvious differences is that an increasing percentage of law students are pursuing legal training part time. Another small fraction starts at one institution and finishes at another. Those students who have more experiences with diversity during law school tend to benefit more in a variety of ways. As we illustrate with some examples from the field, law schools are using their LSSSE findings to better understand what happens to their students and to rethink how classes and the curriculum are organized.

The LSSSE project and this report are a collaborative effort. We are indebted to the Indiana University Center for Survey Research staff who superbly designed and managed the Web survey. Special thanks are due to Alison Anderson for setting the stage with a thoughtful Foreword and to Gerald Hess and Joyce Sterling who put the LSSSE results in perspective by elaborating on their meaning and implications. We encourage you to do the same and invite you to share your views with us and others committed to improving the quality of legal education.

George D. Kuh
Chancellor's Professor of Higher Education
Indiana University Bloomington

There is much more depth and complexity to the student experience than these adages suggest.

Quick LSSSE Facts

Survey

Administered annually via the Web by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research in cooperation with the Indiana University Center for Survey Research. Supported by law school participation fees. Average survey completion time is about 15 minutes.

Objectives

Provide data to law schools to improve legal education, enhance student success, inform accreditation efforts, and facilitate benchmarking efforts.

Partners

Cosponsored by the Association of American Law Schools and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Participating Law Schools

Seventy-three different law schools from 30 states, the District of Columbia and Canada have participated in LSSSE.

Respondents and Response Rates

More than 34,000 law students responded to the LSSSE 2004 or 2005 survey. Average institutional response rate was about 57%, with a range of 34% to 72%. More than three-fourths of participating law schools realized at least a 50% response rate.

Audiences

Law school administrators, faculty members, students, advisory boards, prospective students, accreditors, institutional researchers, higher education scholars, and college and university counselors.

Data Sources

JD/LLB students from participating law schools across the United States and Canada. Supplemented by other information such as institutional records and data from the American Bar Association and the Law School Admission Council.

Cost

Participation fees range from \$3,000 to \$5,000 as determined by JD/LLB student enrollment.

Participation Agreement

Participating law schools agree that LSSSE will use the data in the aggregate for national reporting purposes and other legal education initiatives. Law schools can use their own data for institutional purposes. Results specific to each law school, and identified as such, will not be made public except by mutual agreement.



Seventy-three different law schools from 30 different states, the District of Columbia and Canada have participated in LSSSE.

Figure 1

Size of LSSSE 2004-2005 Law Schools Compared with all ABA-approved Schools

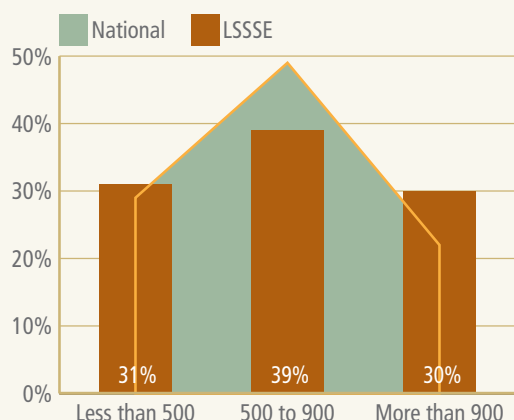
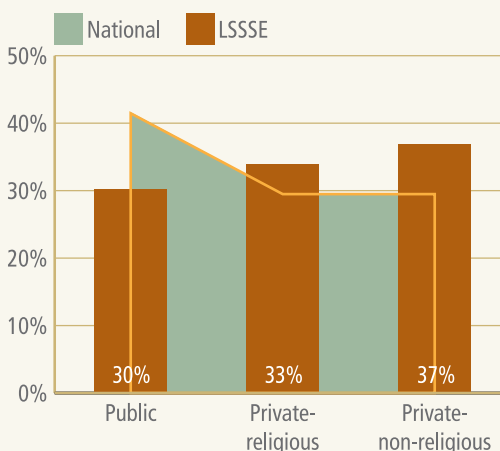


Figure 2

Affiliation of LSSSE 2004-2005 Law Schools Compared with all ABA-approved Schools



Understanding the Law School Experience

—Selected Results

In the first two national administrations, more than 34,000 students from 73 law schools across the United States and Canada answered questions about their activities and experiences on the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE). The following sections highlight key findings from the combined 2004 and 2005 survey data. For schools that participated in both 2004 and 2005, only data from the 2005 survey are included. Therefore, this report analyzes the responses from 28,000 students.

Respondent Characteristics

The gender, race and ethnicity of the survey respondents are representative of student populations in LSSSE 2004-05 schools and law schools nationwide (Table 1).

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1

Gender	Respondents	LSSSE 2004-05 student population	All ABA-approved law schools
Male	48%	50%	48%
Female	52%	50%	52%
Race and ethnicity	Respondents	LSSSE 2004-05 student population	All ABA-approved law schools
American Indian/Native American	2%	1%	1%
Asian American/Pacific Islander	8%	7%	7%
Black/African American	5%	5%	6%
Hispanic/Latino/Spanish	5%	5%	5%
White	81%	79%	81%
Other	4%	3%	-

Note: LSSSE respondents could check more than one racial or ethnic group, so percentages exceed 100%. The ABA and LSSSE categories for race and ethnicity differ.

Source: LSSSE 2005 school data are from institution population files or the ABA-LSAC Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools 2006. National data are from the ABA Section on Legal Education Enrollment Statistics 2004-05.

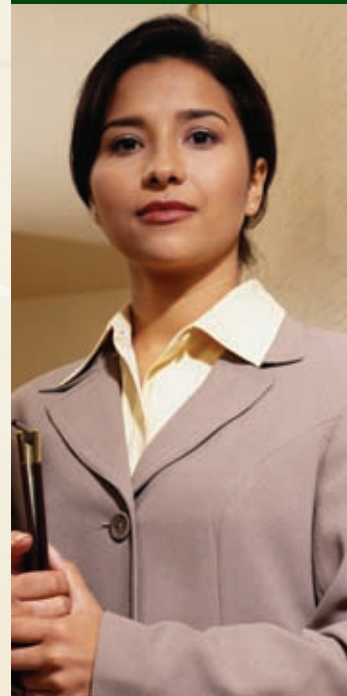
The gender, race and ethnicity of the survey respondents are representative of student populations in LSSSE 2004-05 schools and law schools nationwide.

Promising Findings

- Students who frequently received prompt oral or written feedback from faculty were more positive about their overall law school experience.
- Nine in 10 students said their law school, to a substantial degree (“quite a bit” or “very much”), emphasized studying and spending time on academic work.
- More than four-fifths of law students reported their classes emphasized to a substantial degree applying theories or concepts to practical problems.
- About three-quarters of law students frequently (“very often” or “often”) integrated ideas from various sources into papers or projects.
- Part-time and full-time law students did not differ in terms of how they perceived the degree to which the law school environment supports their academic and social needs.
- More than one-half of students frequently (“often” or “very often”) had serious conversations with students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Students who had more experiences with diversity in law school were more likely to report they benefited from law school and were more satisfied with their overall law school experience.
- First-year law students who were satisfied with academic advising were more likely to perceive the law school environment as supportive and were more satisfied with their overall law school experience.
- Students who were satisfied with career counseling and job search assistance gained more in acquiring work-related knowledge and were more likely to have indicated they would attend the same law school if they could start over again.

Disappointing Findings

- One-fourth (25%) of graduating law students (full-time 3L and part-time 4L) frequently came to class unprepared, compared with only seven percent of 1Ls.
- About one in six students “never” received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty members.
- About two-fifths of law students spent *no time* on cocurricular activities.
- While the proportion of students seeking career counseling and job search help increased each year of law school, satisfaction with these services generally decreased.
- About one-third (36%) of 1L students who sought personal counseling from their law school were “unsatisfied” or “very unsatisfied” with the counseling they received.
- Almost one-half of students said their school did very little to help them cope with their non-school activities (family, work, etc.).
- International students viewed their relationships with classmates as less friendly and supportive than their American counterparts.
- The nine out of 10 JD students who incur debt to attend law school indicated they will owe more than \$77,000 when they graduate.



Students who frequently received prompt oral or written feedback from faculty were more positive about their overall law school experience.

The First Year: “They Scare You to Death”

Responses from more than 10,000 1L students to the LSSSE survey show the first year of law school is, indeed, academically demanding as described by Osborn (1971) and Turow (1977). At the same time, many students report that the learning environment is more inviting and supportive than law school lore and much of the literature suggests.

Academic Challenge and Class Preparation

Educationally effective law schools set high expectations that challenge students to spend time and effort on tasks that contribute to desired learning outcomes. At the same time, they also create supportive learning environments that help students manage demanding expectations.

- Most first-year students (93%) indicated their school placed a substantial degree (“very much” or “quite a bit”) of emphasis on spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work.
- Almost all 1L students (93%) frequently (“very often” or “often”) came to class with their readings or assignments completed.

- About four-fifths of 1L students (78%) spend more than 20 hours per week studying and preparing for class. Only three percent spend less than 10 hours per week preparing for class.
- Part-time students understandably spend less time on their studies compared with full-time students (Figure 3).

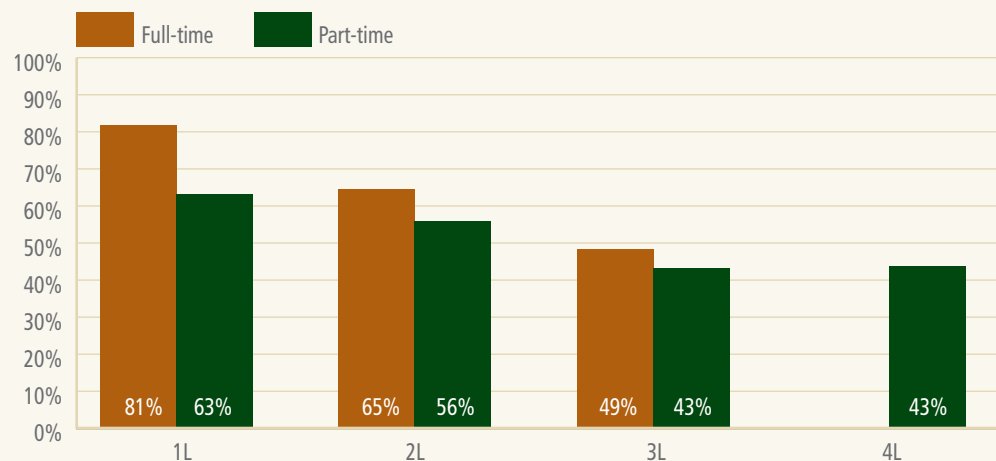
Academic Advising and Personal Counseling

One way educationally effective law schools promote student success in the first year is by providing high-quality academic advising and personal counseling.

- Most 1L students (84%) used academic planning or advising services during the academic year (Figure 4). However, fully one-third was not satisfied with the quality of advising.
- Of the one-half of part-time students who used academic advising in their first year, three-fourths were satisfied with the quality of advising.
- Students at smaller law schools (less than 500 JD/LLB students) were more likely than their counterparts at mid-sized and large schools to seek personal counseling or job search help.

Almost all 1L students frequently came to class with their readings or assignments prepared.

Reading and Preparing for Class*



* Percentage of students who spent 20 or more hours per week

Figure 3



Overall, 1L students rate the quality of their relationships with faculty members, administrators, and other students higher than do 2L or 3L students.

Effect on Student Engagement, Gains and Satisfaction

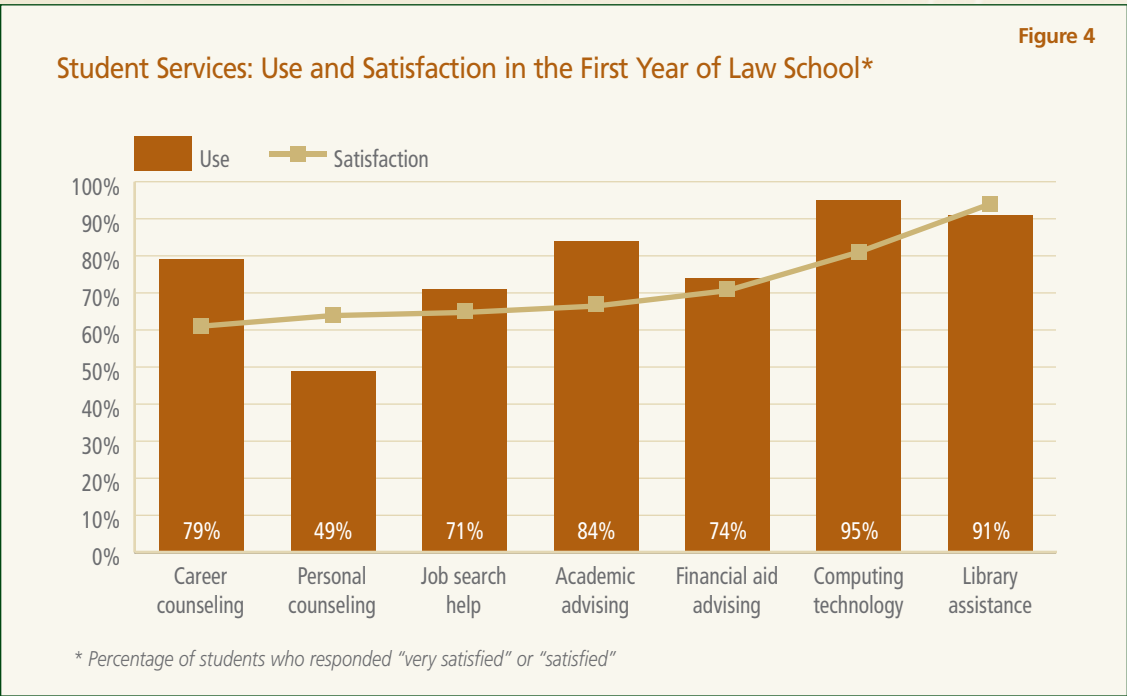
Overall, 1L students rate the quality of their relationships with faculty members, administrators, and other students higher than do 2L or 3L students.

Students who were satisfied with academic advising and planning:

- Were more likely to have higher quality relationships with faculty members and administrators.
- Perceived the law school environment to be more supportive.
- Were more satisfied with their law school experience.

Students who were satisfied with personal counseling:

- Were more likely to have positive relationships with professors and administrative staff.
- Perceived the law school environment as being more supportive.
- Reported they gained more from their first year of law school.
- Were more satisfied with their overall law school experience.





A greater percentage of students spend time involved with cocurricular activities during their second year than any other year of law school.

The Second Year: “They Work You to Death”

Responses from about 9,000 2L students indicate the second year of law school can be demanding both inside and outside of the classroom. Others have persuasively made this case as well (Dieker, 2000; Wellen, 2003).

Time on Task

What students put into their education determines what they get out of it. Table 2 below indicates how law students spend their time during a typical week.

- Full-time students are more likely to work for pay during their second year (48%) than their first year (21%) of law school.
- Full-time students who work spend 13 hours per week at their job. A greater percentage of part-time 2L students also work (81% first year, 88% second year) and do so for more hours (30 hours) than their 1L counterparts (27 hours).
- A greater percentage of students spend time involved with cocurricular activities during their second year (68%) than any other year of law school (55% first year, 63% third year, 37% fourth year).

- On average, full-time students with dependents at home spend 11 hours per week caring for them.
- Time spent caring for dependents is negatively related to the likelihood of a student participating in law student organizations.

Law School Size

Figure 5 shows the great variation across law schools in 2L student participation in journal (4% to 80%, 35% average) and moot court (9% to 67%, 28% average), or working for pay (16% to 89%, 48% average). Substantial differences exist even among law schools of comparable enrollment. Therefore, the “hard-working” 2L moniker may be more applicable in some law settings than others.

Student Time Usage: Hours Spent Per Week

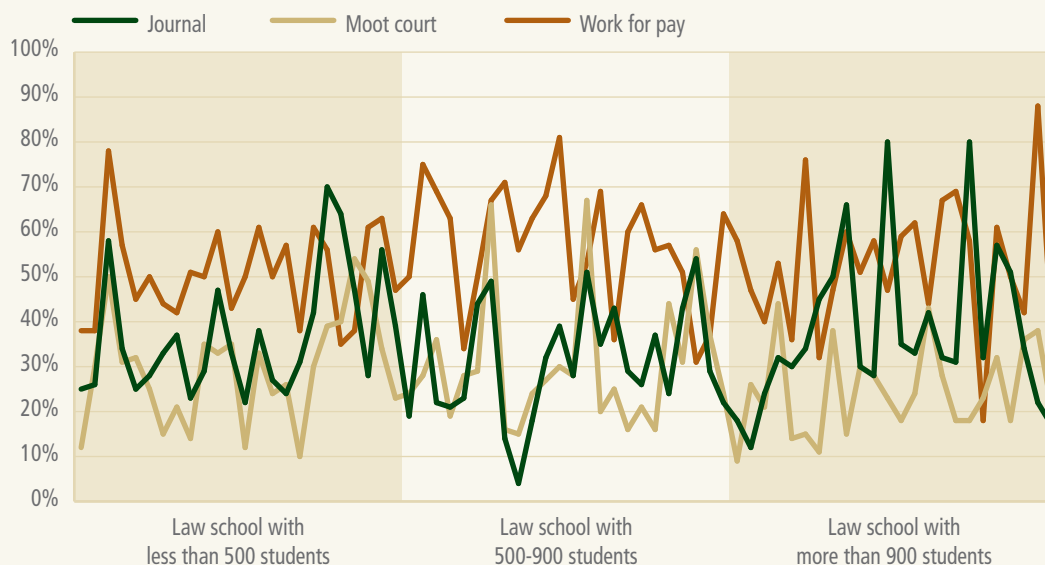
Table 2

	1L Students		2L Students		3L Students		4L Students
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Reading for class	16	21	16	17	13	13	12
Other studying	8	10	7	8	6	8	6
Working in nonlegal job	19	2	19	2	16	2	15
Working in law-related job	8	1	11	4	13	7	15
Participating in cocurricular activities	1	2	1	5	2	5	2
Participating in community organizations	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Pro bono work	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Personal reading	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
Caring for dependents	8	3	10	3	10	4	10
Relaxing and socializing	7	10	7	11	8	12	8
Commuting to class	5	5	5	5	6	5	6



Figure 5

Participation in Journal, Moot Court and Work for Pay by 2L Students



Note: Results are grouped by enrollment categories to insure anonymity of school-specific results

Career Development and Job Search

Career advising becomes increasingly important as students move through law school and wish to clarify their professional interests and goals and explore employment options.

- While the proportion of students seeking career counseling (79% 1L, 86% 2L) and job search help (71% 1L, 83% 2L) increased after the first year of law school, satisfaction with these services generally decreased in the second year (Figure 6).

- 2L students most satisfied with career development services reported that their law school environment placed substantial emphasis on providing the support students need to succeed in their employment search.

- Part-time 2L students were more satisfied with career counseling and job search help than their full-time counterparts.

Effects on Student Engagement, Gains and Satisfaction

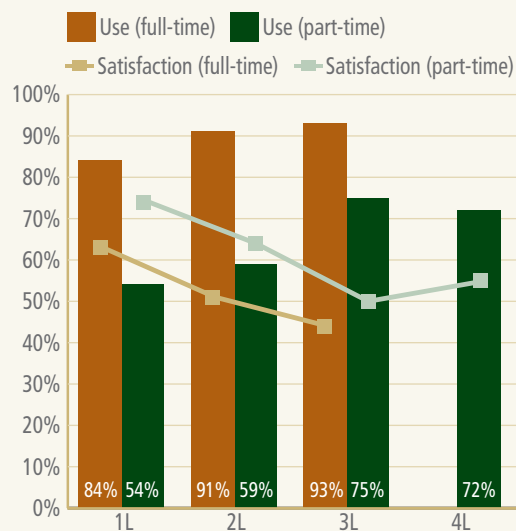
Students who were satisfied with career counseling and job search help:

- Viewed law school administrators to be more supportive and flexible.

- Gained more in developing clear career goals and acquiring work-related knowledge and skills.
- Were more satisfied with their overall law school experience and more likely to attend the same school if they could start over again.

Figure 6

Student Use and Satisfaction with Career Counseling



Students who were satisfied with career counseling and job search help viewed law school administrators to be more supportive and flexible.

The Last Year: “They Bore You to Death”

On average, the approximately 8,000 graduating JD/LLB students responding to LSSSE spent less time on academic work compared with their 1L and 2L counterparts (Table 2, page 10). At the same time, many full-time 3L and part-time 4L students were actively engaged in the life of the law school. The activities and experiences of graduating law students appear to be more diverse than the law school lore and literature suggests (Gulati et al., 2001).

Law School Activities

Generally speaking, students gain more from their educational experiences when they engage in a variety of purposeful activities, inside and outside the classroom. A “substantial amount” of engagement is defined to be at least 50% of all students reporting “often” or “very often” on a

given item (Table 3). The least frequent activities are those where the percentage of students responding “never” exceeded 35%, meaning that roughly one-third had no experiences in these areas.

- Graduating law students (3L and 4L) report comparable levels of engagement to 2L students in most educational activities.
- 3L and 4L students report they are more likely to participate in a clinical project as part of a class, work with faculty members on activities other than coursework, use e-mail to communicate with faculty, and contribute to class discussions.
- One-fourth (25%) of graduating law students frequently came to class unprepared, compared with only seven percent of 1L students.

Law School Activities

Table 3

Most Frequent Activities*	1L Students		2L Students		3L Students		4L Students
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Came to class with readings or assignments complete	94%	93%	87%	84%	82%	74%	81%
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	77%	80%	57%	66%	66%	71%	72%
Discussed ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, coworkers, etc.)	66%	72%	66%	67%	64%	63%	62%
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	63%	69%	50%	56%	57%	55%	60%
Worked harder than you thought to meet a faculty member's standards or expectations	63%	61%	56%	49%	49%	46%	48%
Used e-mail to communicate with a faculty member	58%	57%	54%	62%	58%	66%	57%
Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	56%	70%	54%	68%	58%	65%	54%
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	54%	61%	52%	59%	56%	58%	51%
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	52%	46%	60%	48%	59%	51%	61%
Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	42%	45%	47%	48%	53%	52%	51%

* Percentage of students who responded “very often” or “often”

Least Frequent Activities*	1L Students		2L Students		3L Students		4L Students
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, orientation, student life activities, etc.)	82%	64%	76%	49%	65%	47%	68%
Participated in a clinical or pro bono project as part of a course or for academic credit	95%	91%	91%	69%	71%	46%	72%

* Percentage of students who responded “never”

Many full-time 3L and part-time 4L students were actively engaged in the life of the law school.

Non-traditional Law Students



“LSSE provides a unique opportunity to explore systematically what is achieved—and what can be improved—in traditional and non-traditional areas of the curriculum.”

Bryant G. Garth, Dean and Chief Executive Officer at Southwestern University School of Law

About one-sixth of law students (16%) do their legal training part time, following a four-year program of study. A small fraction of law students transfers from one law school to another. In this section we examine selected aspects of student engagement of these two groups.

Part-time Students

More than one-half of the law schools (55%) participating in LSSE enroll at least 10% of their students on a part-time basis. Nineteen percent of survey responses were from part-time students.

- Part-time students are less likely to participate in such educationally enriching activities as internships, research with professors, pro bono work, moot court and student organizations (Table 5).
- Part-time and full-time law students do not differ in terms of the degree to which they perceive the law school environment supports their academic and social needs.
- Although part-time students spent less time on class preparation and participated less in cocurricular activities (Table 2), they

reported gaining as much from their law school experience as other students (Table 4).

Transfer Students

Only three percent of all LSSE respondents attended law school at another institution before enrolling in the school they currently attend. What is the quality of the educational experience for those who attend multiple institutions during their law school years?

In general, transfer students appear to perform academically on par with continuing students, in that they reported similar grades and degree of academic challenge. However, they differed in other ways.

Transfer students were less likely to:

- Perceive their relationships with other students to be as positive as students who did not transfer.
- Work with other students outside of class to complete an assignment.
- Have serious conversations with students who are different from themselves.
- Discuss ideas from reading or assignments with others outside of class.

Table 4

Self-Reported Educational and Personal Growth Gains From Law School*

	1L Students		2L Students		3L Students		4L Students
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Acquiring a broad legal education	89%	90%	90%	88%	90%	88%	90%
Thinking critically and analytically	90%	89%	86%	86%	87%	87%	87%
Developing legal research skills	81%	85%	72%	76%	74%	78%	78%
Writing clearly and effectively	79%	75%	71%	68%	69%	72%	73%
Learning effectively on your own	78%	79%	77%	79%	76%	79%	78%
Speaking clearly and effectively	60%	57%	58%	59%	58%	63%	62%
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	58%	59%	59%	56%	59%	59%	58%
Understanding yourself	53%	53%	55%	53%	52%	56%	52%
Using computing and information technology	54%	50%	49%	45%	45%	47%	47%
Solving complex real-world problems	51%	49%	50%	47%	48%	50%	51%
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	46%	42%	44%	42%	44%	45%	43%
Working effectively with others	41%	41%	35%	39%	38%	44%	39%
Developing clearer career goals	37%	41%	37%	41%	37%	40%	38%
Contributing to the welfare of your community	33%	37%	33%	37%	33%	39%	35%
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	25%	26%	28%	28%	26%	31%	28%

* Percent students responding “very much” or “quite a bit”



Non-traditional Law Students (continued)

- Work on a paper or project that required integrating ideas.
- Participate in cocurricular activities.

These findings underscore that many of the strongest student relationships are formed during the first year of law school before transfer students join the campus community.

Transfer students were more likely to:

- Be older than students who started law school at the same institution.
- Care for dependents.
- Earn better grades.
- Be an international student.
- Work in a law-related job.
- Be satisfied with the career counseling and job search help they receive.
- Gain more in knowledge, skills and personal development.

Although transfer students were less engaged in certain activities, we speculate that they reported greater gains from law school, in part because most law schools only admit transfers who present superior academic records.

Enriching Educational Experiences

Complementary learning activities inside and outside the classroom augment the academic program and enrich and deepen student learning. Table 5 shows that certain types of students are more likely to engage in various out-of-class activities while in law school. Only students in their final semester before graduation (full-time 3L and part-time 4L students) are represented, because if they have not had these experiences by this point in their studies then they are unlikely to experience them.

- On balance, women, African Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, students of Hispanic origin, multi-racial students, foreign nationals, and joint degree students were more likely to participate in one or more enriching activities.
- Transfer students were less likely than their counterparts to participate in clinical internships or field experiences.
- Returning students—those who enrolled in law school more than five years after earning an undergraduate degree—were more likely to participate in law journal or conduct research with a faculty member, but were less likely than other JD students to participate in a law student organization.

Complementary learning activities inside and outside the classroom augment the academic program and enrich and deepen student learning.

Table 5

Likelihood of Participating in Educationally Enriching Experiences

Student	Clinical internship or field experience	Volunteer or pro bono work	Student-faculty committee	Research with faculty member outside of program	Study abroad	Law journal	Moot court	Law student organization member	Law student organization leader
Female	+	+			+		–	+	+
Asian/Pacific (vs. White)		+							+
Black/African American (vs. White)		+	+					+	+
Hispanic (vs. White)		+							
Multi-racial (vs. White)		+						+	+
International				+					
Part-time	–	–		–			–	–	–
Joint degree			+	+	+				
Transfer	–								
Returning *				+		+		–	

+ indicates student is more likely to participate

– indicates student is less likely to participate

Note 1: Level of significance equal to 0.01

Note 2: Student-level controls include expected work setting (public, private, other); LSAT score; undergraduate GPA; and hours spent on work, academic preparation, cocurricular activities, socializing, caring for dependents, and commuting. Controls also include students' perceptions of the campus environment in terms of relationships among students, faculty and administrative personnel, and perceived support for students' non-academic and academic responsibilities. Institution-level controls include law school enrollment size and type (public, private-religious, private-nonreligious).

* "Returning" designates students who enrolled in law school more than 5 years after earning an undergraduate degree.

Experiences with Diversity

Students gain valuable insights into themselves and other cultures by interacting with people from different backgrounds and learning across differences (Lempert et al., 2000). Indeed, diversity-related experiences are positively related to a variety of effective educational practices. Such experiences include:

- Attending a law school that encourages contact among students of different backgrounds.
- Talking with others of different races/ethnicities.
- Incorporating diverse perspectives into class discussions or papers.
- Gaining a better understanding of people of different backgrounds.

In general, the greater the representation of students from different racial and ethnic groups attending the law school, the more likely students were to engage in diversity-related activities (Figure 7).

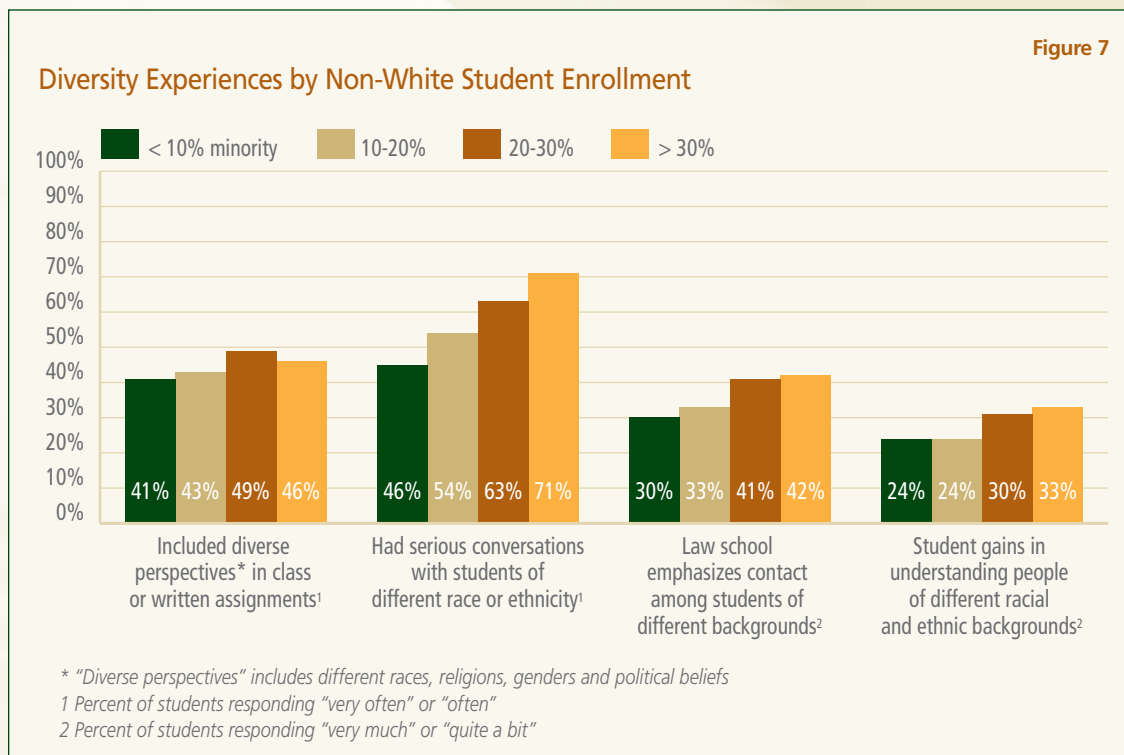
Students who have more experiences with diversity:

- Were more likely to interact frequently with faculty both inside and outside the classroom.
- Reported they gained more from law school.
- Were more satisfied with their overall law school experience.

Students of Color

A supportive law school environment as perceived by students is positively linked to student engagement in educationally beneficial activities. While most students of color view the law school environment as supportive, student involvement and perceptions of campus environments vary among different racial and ethnic groups.

- African Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, students of Hispanic origin, and multi-racial students are more likely than White students to participate in one or more enriching activities (Table 5).
- African American and Asian/Pacific Islander students are less positive than White students about the quality of their relationships with other students.
- American Indian/Alaskan Native students find the environment in law school to be less supportive in meeting their needs than White students do.



"LSSE data gave us a nuanced picture of our student body generally and helpful input with respect to specific issues such as diversity."

*Donna L. Pavlick
 Assistant Dean
 at University
 of Missouri-
 Columbia School
 of Law*

Using LSSSE Data

LSSSE was designed to provide information law schools can use to improve the quality of the law school experience. Here we briefly discuss some different ways law schools are using their engagement results.

Allocating Resources to Meet Student Needs

At **Touro Law Center**, LSSSE results prompted thoughtful discussions about how resources might be better allocated to enhance the learning environment. Associate dean Nicola Lee found her school's students were more apt to have longer commutes, more work and family obligations, and less disposable time than law students at similarly sized campuses. Accordingly, Touro Law's clinic began exploring expanded options to meet all student needs, such as offering a reduced credit course that took less time each week to complete. In addition, campus organizations sought ways to change event schedules in order to better accommodate busy students.

Incorporating LSSSE Results into Regional Accreditation Reviews

One way law schools are using LSSSE results is by incorporating them into their institutional accreditation reviews. **Franklin Pierce Law Center** included student engagement data in their site inspection report for the college's regional accreditation group, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The law school found their survey results to be helpful in describing the student experience; identifying program strengths and areas that need attention; and in creating a plan for future action. According to Sophie Sparrow, professor and director of legal skills and co-chair of the law school's accreditation committee, NEASC found the outcomes-oriented nature of LSSSE data to be very informative in describing the student experience there.

Improving Teaching and Learning

University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law distributed copies of the school's LSSSE report to all faculty members. The deans also presented findings to the faculty at the start of the school year and engaged them in an interactive discussion about the nature of the school's learning environment.

The following spring the school revisited their student engagement data at a faculty meeting to highlight the similarities and differences of the experiences of their part-time and full-time students. Faculty members gained new insights about the level of student involvement, and began to reflect upon how these experiences effect their areas of the academic or student life program. Other law schools, including **Washington and Lee University School of Law**, have shared their LSSSE results at faculty development sessions and committee meetings to seek ways to translate findings into improving the learning experience at the law school.

Aligning the Law School with University Strategic Goals

Ohio Northern University, Pettit College of Law is interpreting their results within the context of the larger university assessment plan. The law school is matching student engagement data with measures of how students are attaining each of the nine university learning goals. Toward this end, the school is collecting several years worth of data to track their LSSSE results over time and to document improvements in the law student experience in response to interventions they are planning.

Using LSSSE as an Assessment Tool for ABA Self-Study

Several schools have utilized their LSSSE data in their ABA and AALS self-study reviews. **Indiana University School of Law Bloomington** administered both LSSSE and a local student survey in preparation for their sabbatical ABA site visit. While the local survey asked several questions specific to the Indiana University Law experience, LSSSE results provided comparative information that highlighted several areas of relative strength and weakness. After finding student debt levels to be higher than other public law schools, Indiana Law instituted a new loan repayment assistance program. In addition to the student section of the self-study report, the law school incorporated LSSSE data into discussions of the curriculum, career services, and administration. **Drake University Law School**, **University of Missouri – Columbia School of Law** and **Oklahoma City University School of Law** are among other LSSSE schools using their data in the ABA self-study process.

"LSSSE assists our faculty and administrators in assessing the College's performance, as well as provides a tangible framework for focusing on our strategic initiatives."

*James J. Alfini
President and
Dean of South
Texas College
of Law*



Many law schools have enlisted the help of their university institutional research office in analyzing their LSSSE results.

Developing a Multi-Dimensional Action Plan

Brigham Young University Clark Law School collaborated with the university's institutional research office to better understand the LSSSE data and to create a plan to improve the quality of the educational experience. Among their initiatives, the law school integrated what they learned from their LSSSE results into their orientation program to set high standards for entering JD students. It also reallocated resources to better meet student needs and to help remove potential barriers to student involvement. A faculty committee examined how to modify curricular requirements and expectations to enhance learning. The school also shared their survey results with their Student Bar Association, which sponsored several student-led initiatives designed to create a more supportive environment for all students.

Collaborating with Institutional Research

Many law schools have enlisted the help of their university institutional research office in analyzing their LSSSE results. St. John's University School of Law worked with their research office to break down the data into a format that facilitated sharing the results with different offices. When their new dean arrived on campus, she had a quick snapshot of student life. The law school shared the results both with administrators and student leaders to create an action plan for addressing areas of student concern. Other law schools, such as New York Law School and South Texas College of Law, have used the expertise of institutional researchers housed in their law school to analyze sub-populations of interest using the data file included in the LSSSE report that contains all student responses to the survey.

LSSSE Public Disclosure Policy

LSSSE encourages public disclosure of student engagement results in ways that serve to increase understanding of law school quality and that support efforts to improve law school teaching and student learning.

Disclosing law school results from the LSSSE survey provides an opportunity to help educate the public about the value of student engagement as a new metric for defining and examining law school quality. LSSSE especially supports public reporting of student engagement results in ways that enable thoughtful, responsible comparisons while encouraging and celebrating institutional diversity.


Whether a participating law school makes public their student engagement results is up to the institution.

Consistent with the LSSSE participation agreement, LSSSE does not make institutional results available to third parties. Law schools may do so as stated in the LSSSE Participant Agreement. While organizations

and individuals are entitled to request LSSSE data from participating law schools, LSSSE is neutral as to whether institutions supply their results. Premature disclosure of an individual school's results could inadvertently divert the focus away from improvement if the data are used in inappropriate or irresponsible ways.


LSSSE does not support the use of publicly disclosing student engagement results for the purpose of rankings.

The LSSSE Advisory Board and LSSSE cosponsors—Association of American Law Schools and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching—believe reducing student engagement to a single indicator obscures complex dimensions of law school performance. Rankings are inherently flawed as a tool for accountability and improvement, regardless of the information on which they are based. Such comparisons become even more problematic in the case of law schools that differ in terms of mission, resources and profile of students.



Reflecting on Student Engagement in Law School

We are fortunate that two outstanding members of the law school community accepted our invitation to ponder the findings from the first two years of LSSSE results and share their reactions and thoughts.



Gerald Hess is a professor at the Gonzaga University School of Law and also Visiting Professor at Phoenix International School of Law. He is the founder and former director of the Institute for Law School Teaching, which is dedicated to improving the quality of teaching and learning in law school. Professor Hess is co-author/co-editor (with Steve Friedland) of two books on teaching and learning in law school: *Techniques for Teaching Law* and *Teaching the Law School Curriculum*. He co-produced two videotapes and faculty development materials: *Principles for Enhancing Legal Education* and *Teach to the Whole Class: Barriers and Pathways to Learning*. In addition, he is past chair of the AALS Teaching Methods Section, faculty member at the National Judicial College, and on the editorial board of the *Canadian Legal Education Annual*.

Joyce Sterling is a professor at the University of Denver College of Law. Her current research focuses on the legal profession and legal education. Recently she completed a monograph for the Colorado Women's Bar Foundation (titled *Gender Penalties Revisited*) with Professor Nancy Reichman based on a study of the careers of men and women lawyers in Colorado. Professor Sterling is a member of the executive coordinating committee and co-author of *After the JD: First Results of a National Study of Legal Careers*, a multi-year study sponsored by the NALP Foundation and American Bar Foundation tracking the professional lives of more than 5,000 lawyers. In addition, she is currently working on a book with Nancy Reichman on careers of men and women lawyers.

From Anecdote to Analysis: LSSSE's Promise

The Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) makes it possible for legal education to move beyond analysis by anecdote. Now, law schools can make curriculum decisions, design faculty development activities, and assess their effectiveness based on national and institutional

data provided by the LSSSE. The 2005 national report is based on an impressive, representative sample of legal education—28,000 students at 73 schools.

One of the goals of LSSSE is to provide a basis for improving teaching and learning. Much of the LSSSE data could be used effectively to inform the efforts of institutions and individual teachers to enhance the quality of their pedagogy. Here are two examples:

First, research in higher education generally and legal education in particular emphasize the role of frequent feedback in learning. The 2005 LSSSE results are evidence of the critical importance of feedback in student engagement—“Students who frequently received prompt oral or written feedback from faculty were more positive about their overall law school experience.” Unfortunately, the 2005 report reveals that “one in six students ‘never’ get prompt written or oral feedback from faculty members.” Legal educators can foster student learning and motivation by working to improve the quantity and quality of feedback to students.

Second, the conventional wisdom is that third-year students are disengaged and disinterested in their legal education. The LSSSE results find an element of truth in this conventional wisdom—about one-quarter of third-year students frequently come to class unprepared. On the other hand, 3Ls and 4Ls spend approximately 20 hours per week studying and “report comparable levels of engagement to 2L students in most educational activities.” Law schools and law teachers need to find ways to provide educational experiences for 3L and 4L students that will be relevant to their post-graduation professional lives and that motivate them to do their best work.

LSSSE cannot improve legal education, but thoughtful legal educators, armed with data from the LSSSE, can.

Gerald Hess

Professor, Gonzaga University School of Law
Visiting Professor, Phoenix International
School of Law

LSSSE cannot improve legal education, but thoughtful legal educators, armed with data from the LSSSE, can.

Using Multiple Data Sources to Improve Law Schools

The LSSSE 2005 survey results demonstrate the promise of collecting empirical data about student engagement in legal education. This survey, rather than being a ranking tool, promises to provide law schools with information that will be helpful in curriculum reform, that will enhance student satisfaction with their legal education experience, and that will generate insights into the strengths and weaknesses of various aspects of the law school as a learning environment and effective career preparation institution.

The results of this survey, combined with some of the results of the first wave of the *After the JD* study, could encourage schools to consider changes that would both increase student engagement and satisfaction with legal education.

As an illustration, the LSSSE survey presents data on career development and job searches, a topic that was a primary concern in *After the JD*. The survey indicates that while the proportion of students seeking career counseling increases during the three years of law school, the satisfaction with these services declines. Contrasting part-time students to their full-time counterparts, the survey finds that part-time students were more satisfied with their experience with career counseling. It would be instructive to better understand the dynamics behind these responses. In the *After the JD* study, we discovered that the most successful strategies for obtaining jobs after graduation included having a summer law position; participating in the on-campus interview process and using the law school placement office.

Contemplating the results of these two empirical projects, we could explore questions about which law students are more likely to become dissatisfied with the law school services—students who are not performing as well as they expected prior to entering law school, students who have additional burdens of working while going to law school, students who have dependents at home, or students facing the prospect of large debt loads upon graduation. Clearly, it would be useful to schools to know if there is something they can change to increase

assistance to students looking for jobs by the time of graduation. If it is possible to identify students more likely to encounter problems with support services in law school, and if these students are among those more likely to feel dissatisfied with their legal education, this information would point to an area that can and should be improved.



There are a number of additional analyses that LSSSE can do with its data to provide more detailed empirical information for law school faculties and administration. For example, by clustering schools that offer strong clinical education experiences, it would be possible to compare student engagement with students attending schools who do not claim such a strength. Another comparison might look at schools requiring pro bono hours by law students prior to graduation to determine whether these students are more engaged in their studies, more likely to be involved in cocurricular activities and engaged in more diverse relationships than students at schools where there are no such requirements.

An area of concern to the *After the JD* project is the impact of debt load on career choices. LSSSE can begin to analyze data on the impact of predicted debt load on student engagement in law school. The average debt load of LSSSE respondents (\$77,000) appears to be comparable to the mean debt of *After the JD* respondents (\$70,000). What is the impact, if any, of debt load on student engagement in law school? Do students with substantial debt need to work more hours, which in turn makes it less likely they can be involved in cocurricular activities? Do these individuals work with professors on projects outside the classroom? What other potentially dampening effects on engagement does debt load have during law school?

LSSSE promises to be a valuable assessment tool for legal educators and administrators intent on enriching the legal education experience for law students.

Joyce Sterling

Professor, University of Denver College of Law



LSSSE promises to be a valuable assessment tool for legal educators and administrators intent on enriching the legal education experience for law students.



Looking Forward

As noted by Alison Anderson and our two distinguished commentators, Gerald Hess and Joyce Sterling, the annual findings from the LSSSE project are providing previously unavailable information about the law school experience. Equally important, law schools can use their results to focus on areas that can and need to be improved to raise the quality of legal training across the board. As former dean of New York University School of Law John Sexton noted, “There is no one thing that makes a law school great. What makes a great institution is reflection on purpose, and actuation based on that reflection.”

LSSSE findings raise some probing questions. Why, for example, do students of color participate more frequently in enriching educational experiences, such as volunteer or pro bono activities and student organizations? Are they taking affirmative steps to enhance their legal training and cultural capital to level the playing field in order to compete successfully for prestigious positions after graduation? Do they feel a greater obligation to give back to their communities?

The final year of law school does not seem to be the “deadly,” boring experience often mentioned in the literature. At the same time, many students do not spend as much time and effort on their studies. Why is that? And, assuming it is an undesirable state of affairs, what might be done?

At some law schools, students report more participation in educationally enriching activities and valuable learning experiences. What accounts for these higher levels of engagement? Are there intentional actions these law schools are taking? If so, can these practices be documented and shared with the legal education community?

LSSSE hopes to join with others in investigating these and other evocative questions, and in documenting successful efforts that enhance the quality of the law school experience for all students. To make such inquiries possible, participating law schools in LSSSE 2006 will have the option of creating a self-selected consortium of six or more schools for a small additional fee that will allow schools to ask up to 20 additional questions. We welcome suggestions to make the LSSSE project even more useful to participating schools and other interested parties.

At some law schools, students report more participation in educationally enriching activities and valuable learning experiences. What accounts for these higher levels of engagement?

Supporting Materials

Supporting Materials on the LSSSE Web site

For more detailed information on the 2005 Annual Report, please visit LSSSE's Web site at: nsse.iub.edu/lssse

- Copy of LSSSE's survey instrument
- Profiles of all participating law schools
- Frequency reports of student responses presented by class year with comparisons based on school size, school affiliation, and all participating LSSSE law schools
- Presentations from national conferences and campus workshops
- Registration information for LSSSE 2006 administration

Resources

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ALEX WELLEN, *BARMAN: PING-PONG, PATHOS, AND PASSING THE BAR* (2003).



More detailed information on the 2005 Annual Report is available on LSSSE's Web site at nsse.iub.edu/lssse

The LSSE survey is administered entirely online. In addition to the questions listed below, respondents can submit additional written comments at the end of the survey.

Law School Survey of Student Engagement 2005





Please mark your answers in the boxes. Examples: ☒ or ☐ In the larger boxes, please print your responses.

1	In your experience at your law school during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
a.	Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Came to class without completing readings or assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	Worked with other students on projects during class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	Participated in a clinical or pro bono project as part of a course or for academic credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	Used an electronic medium (listserv, chat group, Internet, instant messaging, etc.) to discuss or complete an assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	Used e-mail to communicate with a faculty member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l.	Discussed assignments with a faculty member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m.	Talked about career plans or job search activities with a faculty member or advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n.	Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o.	Received prompt feedback from faculty on your academic performance (written or oral)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p.	Worked harder than you thought you could to meet faculty members' standards or expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2	Mark the box that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work.	Very little	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very much
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

3	During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?	Very little	Very Quite much a bit	Some	Very little
a.	Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[illegible]

8	To what extent does your law school emphasize each of the following?	Very much 	Quite a bit 	Some 	Very little 
a.	Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Encouraging the ethical practice of the law	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Providing the support you need to succeed in your employment search	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	Providing the support you need to thrive socially	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	Attending campus events and activities (special speakers, cultural events, symposia, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	Providing the financial counseling you need to afford your education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	Using computers in academic work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9 Mark the box that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at your law school.

	a. Other students		b. Faculty members		c. Administrative staff and offices	
	Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging		Available, helpful, sympathetic		Helpful, considerate, flexible	
1	7	7	7	7	7	7
2	6	6	6	6	6	6
3	5	5	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	3	3	3	3	3	3
6	2	2	2	2	2	2
7	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation		Unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic		Unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid	

10	To what extent has your experience at your law school contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a.	Acquiring a broad legal education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Writing clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Speaking clearly and effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Thinking critically and analytically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	Using computing and information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	Developing legal research skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	Working effectively with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	Learning effectively on your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	Understanding yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l.	Solving complex real-world problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m.	Developing clearer career goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n.	Developing a personal code of values and ethics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o.	Contributing to the welfare of your community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11 How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at your law school?

12 If you could start over again, would you go to the *same law school* you are now attending?

☐ Definitely yes

☐ Probably yes

☐ Probably no

☐ Definitely no

13 Write in the year of your birth:

1	9		
---	---	--	--

14 Your sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

15 Are you married? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16 Are you an international student or foreign national? ☐ Yes ☐ No

17 What is your racial or ethnic identification?
(Mark all that apply.)

☐ American Indian or other Native American

☐ Asian American or Pacific Islander

☐ Black or African American

☐ Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

☐ White

☐ Other, specify: _____

18 Thinking about the current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment?

Is your enrollment:

☐ Full-time ☐ Less than full-time

Is your enrollment:

☐ Day division ☐ Evening division

19 Are you participating in a joint-degree program?

☐ No ☐ Yes, specify:

20 What is your current classification in your JD program?

☐ Other, specify:

21 Did you begin law school at your current institution or elsewhere?

☐ Started here ☐ Started elsewhere

22. How many years elapsed between earning your undergraduate degree and enrolling in law school?

☐ 0 ☐ 3-5 ☐ More than 10

☐ 1-2 ☐ 6-10

23 What have most of your grades been up to now at this law school?

<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B ⁺	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> A ⁻	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/> B ⁻	<input type="checkbox"/>

24 How much educational debt from attending law school do you expect to have upon your graduation?

☐ \$0

☐ \$1 - \$20,000

☐ \$20,001 - \$40,000

☐ \$40,001 - \$60,000

☐ \$60,001 - \$80,000

☐ \$80,001 - \$100,000

☐ \$100,001 - \$120,000

☐ More than \$120,000

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR VIEWS!

Questions or comments? Contact Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSE), Indiana University, Center for Postsecondary Research, Eigenmann Hall, Suite 411, 1900 East Tenth Street, Bloomington, Indiana, 47406-7512 or lsse@indiana.edu or www.iub.edu/~nsse/lsse. Copyright © 2004 Indiana University

25 Which field best describes your area(s) of legal specialization or expected area(s) of specialization? (Mark *only one* in each column.)

Primary specialty	Second specialty (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alternative dispute resolution
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bankruptcy
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Civil rights
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Constitutional
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate and securities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Criminal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment and labor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental and natural resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family and juvenile
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	General practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Immigration
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	International
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Litigation and trial
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Military
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nonlegal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patent and intellectual property
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public interest
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Real estate
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tax
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trusts and estates
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Undecided
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, specify: <div></div>

26 Which setting(s) best describe(s) (1) your PREFERRED work environment, and (2) your EXPECTED work environment once you graduate from law school? (Mark *only one* in each column.)

(1)	(2)
Preferred setting	Expected setting

<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic (professor, education agency)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accounting firm
<input type="checkbox"/>	Business and industry (corporate counsel)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Government agency (federal, state)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Judicial clerkship
<input type="checkbox"/>	Legislative office
<input type="checkbox"/>	Military
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nonlegal organization
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private firm - small (fewer than 10 attorneys)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private firm - medium (10-50 attorneys)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private firm - large (more than 50 attorneys)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prosecutor's office
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public defender's office
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public interest group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Solo practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, specify:

27 What was your LSAT score?

28 What was your undergraduate grade point average?

Participating Law Schools: 2004-2005

American University, Washington
College of Law
Washington, DC

Ave Maria School of Law
Ann Arbor, MI

Brigham Young University –
J. Reuben Clark Law School
Provo, UT

Brooklyn Law School
Brooklyn, NY

California Western School of Law
San Diego, CA

Case Western Reserve University
School of Law
Cleveland, OH

The Catholic University of America,
The Columbus School of Law
Washington, D.C.

Charleston School of Law
Charleston, SC

City University of New York School of
Law at Queens College
Flushing, NY

Cleveland State University Cleveland-
Marshall College of Law
Cleveland, OH

Concord Law School
Los Angeles, CA

Drake University Law School
Des Moines, IA

Florida Coastal School of Law
Jacksonville, FL

Fordham University School of Law
New York, NY

Franklin Pierce Law Center
Concord, NH

Georgetown University Law Center
Washington, DC

Georgia State University
College of Law
Atlanta, GA

Harvard Law School
Cambridge, MA

Indiana University School of Law
– Bloomington
Bloomington, IN

Loyola University School of Law,
Chicago
Chicago, IL

Mercer University, Walter F. George
School of Law
Macon, GA

Michigan State University
College of Law
East Lansing, MI

New York Law School
New York, NY

Northeastern University
School of Law
Boston, MA

Nova Southeastern University Shepard
Broad Law Center
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Ohio Northern University, Pettit
College of Law
Ada, OH

Oklahoma City University
School of Law
Oklahoma City, OK

Osgoode Hall Law School
of York University
Toronto, ON

Pace University School of Law
White Plains, NY

Quinnipiac University School of Law
Hamden, CT

St. John's University School of Law
Jamaica, NY

Saint Louis University School of Law
St. Louis, MO

St. Thomas University School of Law
Miami, FL

Samford University, Cumberland
School of Law
Birmingham, AL

Santa Clara University School of Law
Santa Clara, CA

Seattle University School of Law
Seattle, WA

Seton Hall University School of Law
Newark, NJ

South Texas College of Law
Houston, TX

Southern Illinois University
School of Law
Carbondale, IL

Southwestern University
School of Law
Los Angeles, CA

Stetson University College of Law
Gulfport, FL

Syracuse University College of Law
Syracuse, NY

Suffolk University Law School
Boston, MA

Temple University Beasley
School of Law
Philadelphia, PA

Texas Tech University School of Law
Lubbock, TX

Texas Wesleyan University
School of Law
Fort Worth, TX

Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg
Law Center
Huntington, NY

The University of Alabama
School of Law
Tuscaloosa, AL

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville,
School of Law
Fayetteville, AR

University of Arkansas at Little Rock
School of Law
Little Rock, AR

University of Baltimore School of Law
Baltimore, MD

University of Detroit Mercy
School of Law
Detroit, MI

University of the District of Columbia,
David A. Clarke School of Law
Washington, D.C.

University of Idaho College of Law
Moscow, ID

University of Missouri – Columbia
School of Law
Columbia, MO

University of Missouri – Kansas City
School of Law
Kansas City, MO

University of Montana School of Law
Missoula, MT

University of Richmond, The T.C.
Williams School of Law
Richmond, VA

University of Nevada, Las Vegas,
William S. Boyd School of Law
Las Vegas, NV

University of the Pacific, McGeorge
School of Law
Sacramento, CA

University of Pittsburgh School of Law
Pittsburgh, PA

University of St. Thomas
School of Law
Minneapolis, MN

University of San Francisco
School of Law
San Francisco, CA

University of South Dakota Law
School
Vermillion, SD

University of Tennessee
College of Law
Knoxville, TN

University of Tulsa College of Law
Tulsa, OK

Valparaiso University School of Law
Valparaiso, IN

Washburn University School of Law
Topeka, KS

Washington and Lee University
School of Law
Lexington, VA

Washington University School of Law
St. Louis, MO

Western New England College
School of Law
Springfield, MA

Whittier Law School
Costa Mesa, CA

William Mitchell College of Law
St. Paul, MN

“We received
extraordinarily
valuable
feedback about
our students, our
teaching and
our services from
participating in
LSSSE. It gave
us a way to
measure and
hold ourselves
accountable
for improving
student learning.”

*Sophie M.
Sparrow
Professor of Law
at Franklin Pierce
Law Center*

Law School Survey of Student Engagement

Director
George Kuh

LSSSE Project Manager
Patrick O'Day

LSSSE Project Associate
Amy Garver

Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research

Associate Director, Research & Data Analysis
Robert Gonyea

Associate Director, NSSE Institute
Jillian Kinzie

Assistant Director, NSSE Survey Operations
Todd Chamberlain

Finance Manager
Kim Harris

BCSSE Project Manager & Research Analyst
Ty Cruce

BCSSE Project Associate
John Moore

FSSE Project Manager
Thomas Nelson Laird

FSSE Project Associate
Michael Schwarz

CSEQ Project Manager & Research Analyst
Julie Williams

CSEQ Project Associate
John Kuykendall

NSSE Institute Project Manager
Kathy Anderson

NSSE Institute Project Associates
Jennifer Buckley
Susan Johnson

NSSE Project Associates
Rob Aaron
Chad Ahren
Lowell Davis
Michelle Salinas Holmes
Ted Ingram
Camille Kandiko
Ryan Padgett
Helen-Grace Ryan

Research Analysts
Pu-Shih Daniel Chen
Shimon Sarraf
Rick Shoup

NSSE Research Project Associates
Fred Wanjera
Xingming Yu

Webmasters
Justin Reynard
Jonathan Tweedy

Special Projects Coordinator
Julie Sylvester

Office Coordinator
Delene Churchill

Office Secretary
Kriszta Lane

Project Support Staff
Abbi Devery
Lyndsey Gibson
Kyle Heady
Nick Lindholm
Erin Whisler

Indiana University Center for Survey Research

Director
John Kennedy

Associate Director
Nancy Bannister

Assistant Director, Budget & Finance
Donna Hackney

Assistant Director, Technology
Kevin Tharp

Project Manager
Kellie McGiverin-Bohan

Field Manager
Jamie Salazar

Research Assistants
Kristin McCormick
Mark Niswander
Nick Roberts
Debra Seitzinger
Stephanie Shuster
Amanda Wrigley

Senior Supervisor
Erica Moore

Programmer/Analyst
Tom Wang

Computing Assistants
Nicholas Bannister-Andrews
Jason Francis



"Participating in the LSSSE project provided motivation for us to develop a comprehensive alumni survey designed to capture similar data."

*Gina D. Rowsam
Assistant Dean
of Professional
and Career
Development
Center at
Oklahoma City
University School
of Law*



Law School Survey of Student Engagement

Center for Postsecondary Research
Indiana University Bloomington
School of Education
Eigenmann Hall, Suite 419
1900 E. 10th Street
Bloomington, IN 47406-7512

Phone: 812-856-5824
Fax: 812-856-5150
E-mail: lsse@indiana.edu

nsse.iub.edu/lsse